

## Message Text

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46

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 T-03 OMB-01 AID-20 EB-11 COME-00

IO-12 INT-08 AGR-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12

RSR-01 /178 W

----- 050060

R 140900 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2366

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 1727

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR , AF, IR, PFOR

SUBJECT: AFGHAN- IRANIAN RELATIONS; PM HOVEYDA VISITS KABUL,  
SIGNS HELMAND WATERS AGREEMENT

REF: ( ALL NOTAL): ( A) KABUL 1707; ( B) TEHRAN 1570; ( C) KABUL 1680

SUMMARY: DURING PRIMIN HOVEYDA'S VISIT TO KABUL MARCH 12-14,  
HELMAND WATERS AGREEMENT SIGNED. AFGHANS STAGED MAJOR PUBLIC  
RELATIONS EFFORT REGARDING TREATY. IRANIANS RESPONDED OFFICIALLY  
IN SPEECHES AND TOASTS AND UNPRECEDENTED WARMTH CHARACTERIZED  
VISIT. VIRTUAL EUPHORIA SEEMS HAVE GRIPPED PARTICIPANTS AS THEY  
DISCUSSED CLOSENESS TWO NATIONS AND POSSIBLE COOPERATION IN  
" NEW ERA" RESULTING FROM SIGNATURE. ACTION REQUESTED: NONE.  
END SUMMARY.

1. PRIMIN HOVEYDA VISITED KABUL MARCH 12-14. HELMAND WATERS  
AGREEMENT ( TREATY OF TWELVE ARTICLES AND TWO PROTOCOLS OF 13  
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AND 9 ARTICLES) SIGNED 1230 HOURS MARCH 13 IN CONVINCING DISPLAY WARMTH ON BOTH SIDES WITH HOPES FOR FUTURE, INCREASED COOPERATION MUCH IN EVIDENCE.

2. AT AIRPORT MARCH 14 FOR DEPARTURE, DEPFONMIN FARHADI TOLD AMBASSADOR FOLLOWING WAS OFFICIAL BUT INFORMAL STATEMENT ON PART RGA: " HELMAND WATERS AGREEMENT MARKS BASIC CHANGE IN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IRAN AND AFGHANISTAN, IMPORTANT BEGINNING OF REDUCTION OF SENSITIVITIES BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES, AND OPENING OF PERSPECTIVES OF GREATLY INCREASED COOPERATION IN ALL FIELDS."

3. CONTINUING CONVERSATION, FARHADI SAID IRANIANS HAD OBVIOUSLY LEARNED LOT ABOUT HOW TALK WITH AND TO AFGHANS BOTH PRIVATELY AND PUBLICLY. ADDED IRANIAN DELEGATION HAD BEHAVED " IMPECCABLY." EMPHASIZING " COMMON CULTURE" THEME IN LUNCHEON AND DINNER SPEECHES AND IN TOASTS, FARHADI SAID THIS SUBJECT HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN ROABOO HERE.

4. RGA OFFICIALS, INCLUDING LOWER HOUSE SECRETARY MOBIN SHAH, PRIVATELY PREDICTED PARLIAMENTARY RATIFICATION OF TREATY THIS SESSION, BUT ANTICIPATED SOME SPEECHES AGAINST AS WELL AS NEGATIVE PRESS REACTION FROM CERTAIN QUARTERS, INCLUDING FORMER PRIMIN MAIWANDWAL. THEY BELIEVE PARLIAMENT WILL APPROVE BY " COMFORTABLE MARGIN." OFFICIALS INDICATED AGREEMENT WOULD BE FORMALLY PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT ON MARCH 17 FOR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION AT MARCH 18 PLENARY.

5. NOTEWORTHY TO US HAS BEEN EXTENSIVE PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN MOUNTED BY RGA. IN ADDITION SHAFIQ PRESS CONFERENCE AND RADIO SPEECH ( GIVEN IN PUSHTU MARCH 10 AND REPEATED IN DARI MARCH 11) REPORTED REF C, RGA STAGE- MANAGED RADIO ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON MARCH 11. PARTICIPANTS WERE ABDUL LATIF JALALI ( PRESIDENT, RADIO AFGHANISTAN), ABDUL HAQ WALEH ( CARAVAN EDITOR/ PUBLISHER) AND SAYED KHALIL ( NEWLY APPOINTED PRESIDENT BAKHTAR NEWS AGENCY). PROGRAM THEMES WERE SATISFACTION SOLUTION REACHED AND ADVANTAGES TO AFGHANISTAN STEMMING FROM IT. GOVERNMENT- PRESS EDITORIALS ON MARCH 11 AND 12 ( SEE REF C) WERE ALSO FRIENDLY AND IN PART RESULT PM SHAFIQ' S PRESS CONFERENCE ON MARCH 10. ONLY PRIVATE PRESS EDITORIALS WERE SABA ON MARCH 12 AND AFKARE NAU ON MARCH 11, BOTH OF WHICH GAVE RESTRAINED APPROVAL TO TREATY. SURPRISINGLY CARAVAN HAS NOT COMMENTED EDITORIALY ON AGREEMENT OR ON VISIT.

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6. PM SHAFIQ AT BOTH LUNCHEON AND DINNER MADE POINT IN SEMI-

PUBLIC STATEMENT TO AMBASSADOR OF HOW MUCH RGA OWED US FOR OUR INFORMAL ASSISTANCE BEHIND THE SCENES TO PRODUCE THIS HAPPY CONCLUSION OF VEXING PROBLEM. IRANIAN AMBASSADOR AND PRIMIN HOVEYDA ALSO STRESSED IRAN' S ( AND SHAH' S) APPRECIATION OF USG ROLE.

7. COMMENT:

A. EXCEPTIONAL ATMOSPHERE PREVAILED FOR VISIT. AMBASSADOR WAS STRUCK BY OBVIOUS WARMTH AND SINCERITY IN SPEECHES ON BOTH SIDES-- ACTIONS WHICH CREATED VIRTUAL EUPHORIA AT BOTH LUNCHEON AND DINNER. IN FACT, IT SEEMED THAT CONTINUED MUTUAL EXPRESSIONS OF COMPLIMENTS AND CLOSENESS AFGHAN/ IRANIAN RELATIONS LED PARTICIPANTS ACTUALLY BELIEVE WHAT THEY SAYING.

B. WE KNOW THIS IN LINE SHAFIQ' S PLANS AND INTENTIONS. HE ANXIOUS MOVE FORWARD ESPECIALLY ON HELMAND VALLEY AND ROAD CONNECTION TO IRAN AND BANDAR ABBAS. WHILE NO SPECIFIC CONFIRMATION AVAILABLE, WE READ FARHADI' S CX COMMENTS ( PARAS TWO AND THREE ABOVE) AS INDICATIVE THIS DISCUSSED WITH HOVEYDA.

C. NEGATIVE NOTES HAVE NOT YET SURFACED; BUT OBVIOUSLY THEY WILL, ESPECIALLY WHEN TEXT TREATY MADE PUBLIC. THERE MAY ALSO BE ANTI- TREEXY DEMONSTRATIONS BESIDES PARLIAMENTARY AND PRESS OBJECTIONS. NONETHELESS, ALL SIGNS POINT TOWARD LIKELIHOOD THAT TREATY WILL BE FORMALLY RATIFIED.

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